

Official Visitors Guide

More *than just* Peaches
Ruston &
Lincoln Parish

inside

Pick Your Passion:

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More than just Peaches

Pick YOUR PASSION

Located in the piney woods of north Louisiana, Ruston is known for its southern charm and incredibly sweet peaches. But more than just peaches, this bustling college town is the perfect getaway for adventure and relaxation. Rejuvenate your mind, body and soul in the hospitality of this family-friendly locale. In Ruston and Lincoln Parish, there is something for everyone. Come see all that we have to offer, and pick your passion!



Shopping

Ruston's 18-block Historic Downtown District offers some of the finest shopping in the South. Its relaxed feel and collection of unique and locally owned stores offer the perfect shopping escape. Come find something that you didn't even know you were looking for in Ruston.

MUSIC

Ruston's live music venues feature performances from talented musicians, ranging from local bands to big-name stars. Come get your fill of rock, country and blues.



Food

"Southern" is the word that best describes food in Ruston, where cast iron skillett are mainstays in homes and restaurants alike. Ruston's food identity is based on agriculture from its surrounding land.



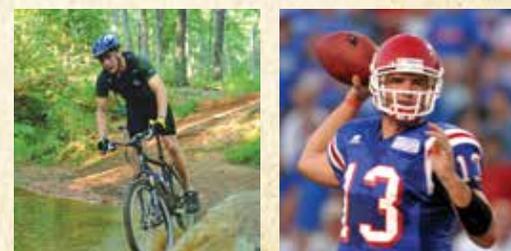
HISTORY



ARTS



SPORTS & Leisure



family fun



WELCOME TO RUSTON



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Visitor's Center

The Ruston Lincoln Visitor's Center is located just one half mile north of Interstate 20. Stop by for help planning your day and enjoy complimentary coffee or bottled water. The Center also has three touch-screen computers, over 500 brochures on Louisiana attractions and road maps of all 50 states available for use.



Go Online to experienceruston.com

Visit our web site for a complete listing of attractions, dining options, shopping outlets, accommodations and upcoming events.



Hotel Accommodations

America's Best Value Inn

1105 Trenton St.
(318) 251-0000 or
800-528-1234
52 rooms,
continental breakfast
& swimming pool.

Comfort Inn



1951 N. Service Rd. E.
(318) 242-0070 or
800-424-6423
comfortinn.com
57 rooms, continental
breakfast, free high-
speed Internet & outdoor
swimming pool. Meeting
space available.

Days Inn



1801 N. Service Rd. E.
(318) 251-2360 or

800-DAYS-INN
daysinn.com
62 rooms, continental
breakfast, free local calls,
newspaper & cable.

Fairfield Inn & Suites



1707 Roberta Ave.
(318) 251-9800
marriott.com
82 rooms including suites,
complimentary hot
breakfast, free high-speed
Internet, fitness center &
indoor swimming pool.
Meeting rooms available.

Hampton Inn



3315 N. Trenton St.
(318) 251-30-90 or
800-HAMPTON
hamptoninn.com
82 rooms, buffet breakfast

& fitness center. Meeting
room available.

Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites



1825 Roberta Ave.
(318) 513-9777 or
877-409-7737
holidayinnexpress.com
65 rooms & 17 suites,
express start breakfast,
fitness center & outdoor
swimming pool. Meeting
rooms available.

Relax Inn

1300 N. Trenton St.
(318) 255-2911
34 rooms, king-size beds &
truck parking.

Sleep Inn & Suites



106 S. Service Rd. E.
(318) 232-1100
choicehotels.com/hotel/
la168
78 rooms, continental
breakfast, free high-speed
Internet, fitness center,
indoor swimming pool
& spa. Meeting rooms
available.

Super 8



1101 Cooktown Rd.
(318) 255-0588 or
800-800-8000
super8.com
42 rooms, free local calls
& swimming pool. Jacuzzi
suites available.

Travel Inn

1705 W. California Ave.
(318) 255-3256
23 rooms, kitchenettes,
cable TV/HBO/ESPN.

SEE & DO

“When you walk in the door and see his statue, it’s touching.”

COACH WILBERT ELLIS
PRESIDENT, FRIENDS OF THE
EDDIE G. ROBINSON MUSEUM

Visit the Eddie G. Robinson Museum

The Eddie G. Robinson Museum, located on Grambling State University’s campus, honors college football’s “winningest coach” and recognizes the outstanding contributions he made to the game of football, the state of Louisiana and the nation. Robinson, a College Football Hall of Fame inductee, won 408 games, graduated 80 percent of his players and saw more than 200 of his athletes to the NFL during his 57-year coaching career at Grambling.

Visitors to the museum can see the life of Eddie Robinson and what he has

done for so many people beyond coaching, according to Coach Wilbert Ellis, Friends of the Eddie G. Robinson Museum president. Ellis worked with Robinson for 43 years.

“When you walk in the door and see his statue, it’s touching,” says Ellis. Ellis believes that every American should have the experience of meeting Robinson, and now they have that opportunity through the museum. “Visitors can feel and see the life of this great man. He was an American for all people—white, black...He believed in education, and you’ll see that.”

PASSION FOR HISTORY



Visitors will feel like they are stepping into a great football era upon entering the museum and will leave with a new appreciation for “Coach Rob,” who received many humanitarian awards outside

of football. According to Ellis, the museum’s exhibits capture Robinson’s spirit and humility.

“You will hear his voice talking to players in the locker room,” says Ellis of the recreated locker room exhibit. The pro-room exhibit showcases jersey plaques and helmets of players that went to the NFL under Robinson, including Super Bowl MVP Doug Williams of the Washington Redskins and NFL Hall of Famers

Willie Davis, Buck Buchanan, Charlie Joiner and Willie Brown. Visitors can also see game footage and Robinson’s briefcase, which he was often seen with, which holds items such as hotel accommodation documentation, rosters and ready sheets.

The number one museum in the state of Louisiana, the Eddie G. Robinson museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

History of Ruston

During the Reconstruction era following the Civil War, word spread to what is now Ruston, that the Vicksburg, Shreveport and Pacific Railroad would soon run across north Louisiana, linking the Deep South with the Wild Wild West. Robert Edwin Russ, the Lincoln Parish sheriff from 1877 to 1880, donated 640 acres to the town, and this area was eventually known as Ruston (shorthand for Russ town).

Visit the Lincoln Parish Museum

Venture back to this time period and see the story of Ruston told through a collection of countless pictures and artifacts. On the National Register of Historic Places, the Lincoln Parish Museum, also known as the Kidd-Davis House, was donated in 1975 by Mary Olive Davis Green and Charlotte Davis Parrot. The house was constructed in 1886 for the



Milton B. Kidd family and sold in 1921 to Robert Wesley Davis.

The museum’s “Walls That Talk” feature includes seven murals showcasing vignettes from Lincoln Parish History, along with voice recordings of parish citizens telling the stories.

Tour the Louisiana Military Museum



Relive 150 years of military history through the lives of local heroes and unknown enemies at the Louisiana Military Museum. The museum displays a massive collection of arms and artifacts, unique to the area, chronicling United States conflicts from the Spanish-American War to Desert Storm and today’s war on terror. It features an expansive weapons collection, as well as personal items such as diaries, Bibles and a flight jacket.



PASSION FOR FAMILY FUN

Explore the Idea Place at Louisiana Tech

Awaken your child's passion for math and science through hands-on learning at the Idea Place, located on the Louisiana Tech University campus. Exhibits range from a salt and fresh water aquarium to the star lab planetarium.

Come learn about some of the most fascinating wonders of the world and investigate scientific phenomena. The Idea Place offers families the opportunity to stimulate curiosity, motivate

further explorations and increase appreciation and understanding in the areas of math and science. While you're there, don't forget to check out the 1926 model autocar truck and the outdoor bayou exhibit.

The Idea Place is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and by appointment on Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$4.00 per person.

Spend a Play Day at Lincoln Parish Park

Looking for the perfect family outing? Come play at Lincoln Parish Park. With a 30-acre lake for swimming, boating and fishing; a white, sandy beach; cozy picnic and camping sites; winding walking paths and mountain bike trails; Lincoln Parish Park has something for everyone. Also located inside the park is Legacy Park, a boundless playground accessible to all children, both with and without special needs. The barrier-free playground is handicap accessible and contains many unique features so that everyone has an opportunity to play. Admission to Lincoln Parish Park is \$2.00 per person.



Louisiana Peach Festival

Visit Ruston on the fourth weekend of June for a fun, family-oriented celebration at the Louisiana Peach Festival.



The downtown streets overflow with music, exciting events, over 200 artisans and vendors and—best of all—delicious, juicy-sweet peaches.



Enjoy weekend-long entertainment including: a fine arts show, a peach cookery contest, a pet show, a peach eating contest, a 5K and fun run, the festival parade, an antique car show, a tennis tournament, arts and crafts, a rodeo, kids' events and more. Plus, stay for live music every night in Railroad Park for toe-tapping, hand-clapping fun.

Visit louisianapeachfestival.org for more information on the Louisiana Peach Festival and this year's dates and times.

ASK A LOCAL MOM

What's the best part of raising a family in Ruston?

The friendly people and small-town atmosphere. We feel safe in Ruston. There is little traffic, and the schools are really good.

Where is your kids' favorite place to go in the area?

Our kids love to get frozen custard from Eskimoe's. It's a fun treat, and they serve a variety of flavors.

Where do you take friends and family when they come into town?

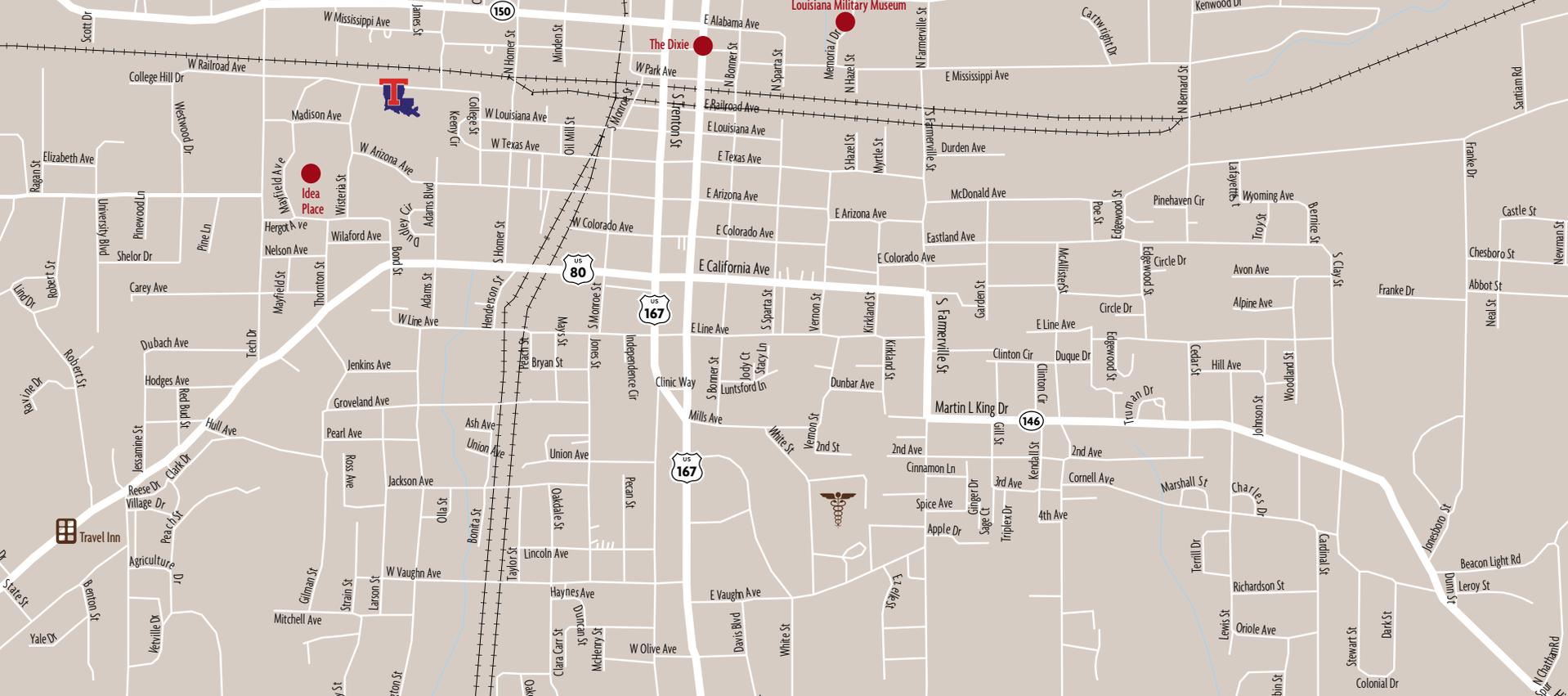
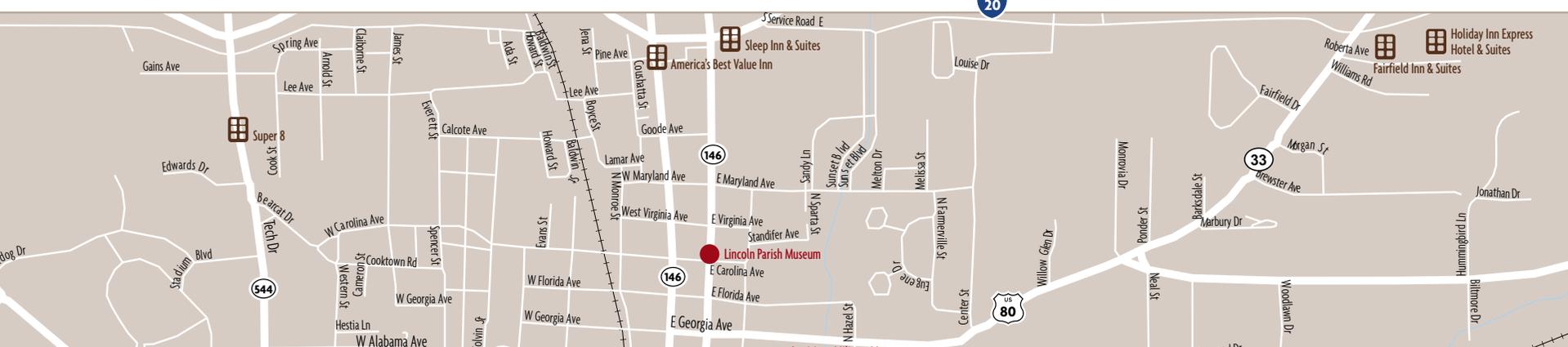
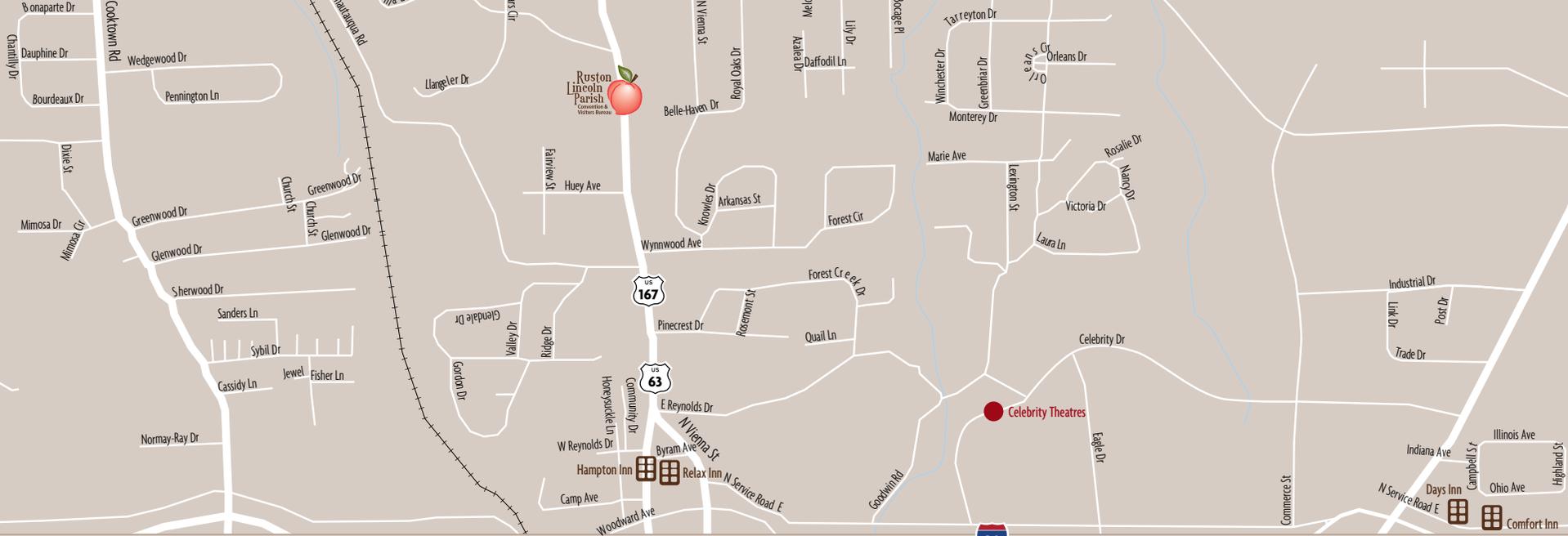
We like taking them to the shops downtown and Tech football games.

Where is your favorite place to eat out in Ruston with your family?

We enjoy eating at Sundown, and when we're in the mood for pizza, we go to Johnny's.



Jean Sanders



Ruston is more than just peaches.



Ruston
Lincoln
Parish
Convention & Visitors Bureau



For a complete listing of attractions, dining options, shopping outlets, accommodations and upcoming events,

Go Online to experienceruston.com





PASSION FOR ARTS & MUSIC

Live Music in Ruston

Ruston offers an impressive live music selection of blues, rock and country from local musicians and big-name stars.

A staple to the Ruston music scene is Monty Russell, a local singer, songwriter and radio personality. After being immersed throughout his youth with the honky-tonk, gospel, western swing and blues music played by his grandfather Leon Russell, Monty set out on a musical journey that has lasted over 30 years. His latest recording,

“The Fool Monty Russell,” was produced by Texas music icon Walt Wilkins and Goose Creek Symphony fiddler Tim Lorsch.

Find Russell at many of Ruston’s live music venues, including 3docs Brew House, Beau Vines/The Revelry, Portico Bar and Grill, Sundown West Tavern Patio and Grill and the Dixie Center for the Arts.

Known for its certified Omaha meat cuts grilled to perfection, Beau Vines/The Revelry has been graced with performances from A-list

musicians including Miranda Lambert, Gary Allan and Cross Canadian Ragweed, to name a few. Visit rustonrev.com for its concert schedule.

3docs, known for its outstanding beer selection, features live blues every Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. on its “Tuesday Bluesday,” as well as a changing concert lineup on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Visit 3docsbrewhouse.com for more information.

Theater at the Dixie

A restored 1928 theater house, the Dixie Center for the Arts presents an array of musical and theatrical productions year round. Home to Ruston Community Theatre shows, this gem also hosts orchestral ensembles from the Ruston Civic Symphony Society and performances from regional and national musicians. The Dixie has a long and rich history as a cultural emblem for the city. Originally the Astor Theater showing silent films and concerts, it was renamed the Rialto in 1932, the same year its exquisite chandelier was added. Although it has seen many owners and renovations, today the Dixie stands on its original site as a cultural center for the city. Visit dixiecenter.org to view the Dixie’s calendar of events.



The Art Scene

Check out Ruston’s art scene, where the works of talented local artists are displayed in shops and galleries throughout the community.



Visit Mississippi Avenue, located in the Historic Downtown District, an artists’ haven in Ruston. Its galleries include By the Alley, Visual Design, Thousandwords Photography and the Piney Hills Gallery, located in the foyer of the Dixie.

Ruston is also home to Louisiana’s oldest pottery producer, Follette Pottery. Since 1979, Kent and Libby Follette have been creating hand-crafted, one-of-kind pieces, as well as giving rising craftspeople a place to showcase and sell their work.

In November, the North Central Louisiana Arts Council hosts the annual Holiday Arts Tour, a two-day event that includes an extensive art crawl. Shops throughout Ruston display the amazing talents of local artists and musicians.

ASK A LOCAL STUDENT

What is your favorite live music venue in Ruston?

The best concert I’ve ever been to in Ruston was at 3docs. It’s a smaller venue, but it allows the audience to have a more personal experience with the band.

What is your favorite thing to do on weekends in the area?

I like to spend my weekends downtown. Stores are always having sales, and most of

my favorite restaurants are downtown. Sometimes live bands play on Park Avenue, and events are always happening.

What is Ruston’s best kept secret?

Rolling Hills Thrift Store. People donate items every day, and there’s always something new no matter how frequently you go. Sometimes you can find items that are brand new.



Tiffany White

Favorite Finds



The Children's Shoppe



The Fashion



Lincoln Outdoor Living



Beehive



Baldwin's Jewelers



Passion for Shopping

Find "It" in Ruston



Ruston's collection of unique and locally owned stores offers some of the finest shopping in the South. Check out the shops in the Historic Downtown District or along the I-20 corridor. Find something you didn't even know you were looking for at Ruston's specialty stores and boutiques.

For yourself, try shopping Park Avenue's impressive row, including All That Jazz, The Fashion and Rodeo Boutique. Offering southern hospitality and personal service, these shops can outfit you from head to toe with fashion-forward clothing. "Fashion is ever-changing. We're bringing in the best from

New York and Los Angeles. It's not just small-town stuff," says Kelly Hogan, owner of The Fashion in Ruston.

For soon-to-be moms, visit Still Jazi maternity boutique, offering stylish clothing for the working professional, fun and funky attire for after five or outfits for those special occasions.

For the little ones in your life, visit the Children's Shoppe, selling timeless children's fashions for girls and boys, specialty books and toys and custom-made hair bows.

The Beehive, located just off I-20, offers great finds at unbeatable prices. Find jewelry, purses, luggage, shoes, home décor and more for yourself or someone else. The Beehive also offers custom monogramming.



For distinctive home décor, try Accent of the East, Roger's Furniture & Gifts, Townsend House Gifts and Lincoln Outdoor Living.

The Pewter Company has an array of pewter products to enhance your home, ranging from bowls and platters to oversized basins and wrought iron stands. Choose from a variety of patterns including swirls, dots, mother of pearl, fleur de lis, classic, contemporary and more, all at great prices.

For other interesting finds, visit Ruston's antique shops, including Chartreuse Pear, Acorn Creek Antiques and Lois Peden's Deep South Antiques.

And don't leave Ruston without getting a special treat from Mitcham Farms Peach Store.

ASK A LOCAL SHOPPER

What is Ruston's best-kept secret?

Lincoln Parish Park. It has some great mountain biking trails, and, in the springtime, it has the most gorgeous dogwood trees.

Where is your favorite place to shop in Ruston?

I love shopping Rodeo, All That Jazz and Embellishments, any of the downtown shops. They're little specialty shops with

things that you can't get in the mall.

What is your favorite thing to do in the area during the summer?

Waterskiing on Claiborne Lake and Caney Lake.

What do you love about the fall season in Ruston?

Louisiana Tech football and tailgating—everyone in the community comes out to support the team.



Sharon Schimmel



PASSION FOR SPORTS & LEISURE

Get your fill of sports and leisure in the scenic outdoor paradise of Lincoln Parish. With a world-class mountain bike trail, three excellent lakes within an hour of Ruston, the top-ranked golf course in Louisiana by Golf Digest and two universities with outstanding athletic programs and events, there is something for everyone.

Outdoor Adventure

Lincoln Parish Park's 10-mile mountain bike trail is rated one of the best in the country, offering challenging elevation changes and beautiful

scenery. An exciting course for the advanced rider, its most talked about challenge is Tomac Hill, involving a 120-foot "ski jump" downhill, followed by one of the biggest jumps of the course.

"This park has possibly the best spectator viewing scenario of any XTERRA race course we have ever had the pleasure of racing," says XTERRA President Janet Clark.

Visit Lake Claiborne, Caney Lake and Lake D'Arbonne for your pick of swimming, fishing, boating and waterskiing. "All offer excellent opportunities for bass anglers. In the summer

ASK A LOCAL OUTDOORSMAN

Which local retailers do you visit for tackle and gear?

Greg Terzia's Bait and Tackle, Cranford's Northside, McKinney Outdoors and Backus True Value.

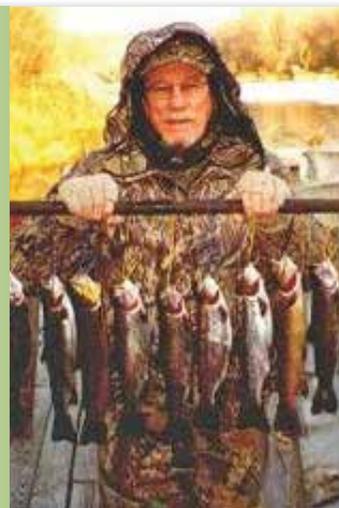
Where is the best place for hunters to visit?

You'll find private hunting leases all over Lincoln Parish, but there are public areas available as well. A few miles south of Ruston, the

Jackson-Bienville Wildlife Management Area is open to the public and offers more than 30,000 acres of prime hunting area.

What is your favorite local restaurant?

For special nights out, my wife and I enjoy Raw on Park Avenue. For a good, hearty lunch, I like Scott's Catfish because of their great selection of seafood.



Glynn Harris

when the water warms, the largemouth bass start jumping and are a ton of fun to catch," says Glynn Harris, local outdoor writer and radio show host.

One of the most popular activities on 6,400-acre Lake Claiborne is swimming at the park's sandy beach. Caney Lake has produced state-record-setting bass, weighing in at over 15 pounds. This 5,000-acre lake is also a local favorite for waterskiing.

"Hunting season in our area begins the first weekend in September with doves," says Harris. "Bow season for large game, including deer, usually opens around the first of October, with gun season following a couple of weeks later. Waterfowl season normally runs November to January. Wild turkey season is relatively new to Louisiana and is usually open March to April."

Sports Entertainment

Louisiana Tech University offers great sports entertainment for spectators with 16 varsity NCAA Division I sports teams in the Conference USA. Tech is known for its exciting football program, as well as its Lady Techsters women's basketball team, winner of three national championship titles.

Member of the NCAA Division I Southwestern Athletic Conference, the Grambling State University Tigers also put on an outstanding show. Come and check out the talented Tiger Marching Band.



FIVE FUN & FREE things to do around RUSTON



1

Catch a free outdoor concert in Railroad Park.

Visit rustonlincoln.com for listings.

2



Play a game of frisbee golf in Hideaway Park.

Gather friends for an afternoon of fun and fierce competition.

3

Peruse the exhibits at the university student art galleries.

Visit Louisiana Tech and Grambling for a look inside these young creative minds.

4



Visit James Lake Birding Trail.

Calling all nature enthusiasts! View a wide variety of birds in this outdoor paradise.



5

Visit the Autrey House.

Open the third Saturday and Sunday of March through October, the Autrey House is the oldest dogtrot style home in the area.



Follow Louisiana Culinary Trails to Ruston & Lincoln Parish

Tempt your taste buds at these five Ruston restaurants, all named apart of the prestigious Louisiana Culinary Trails list, compiled by the Louisiana Travel Promotion Association.

Dowling's Smokehouse



Craving barbeque? When you walk into Dowling's Smokehouse, you'll know that you've come to the right place, as the smell of mouth-watering barbeque fills the air. Dowling's serves ribs, chicken, pulled pork, beef brisket, smoked sausage, sandwiches and more. Their most popular sandwich, the World Famous Scatterload, combines minced ham, turkey, hot link, sausage, brisket and cheese on your choice of bun.

and delicious," says manager Jack Williams.

The atmosphere at Dowling's is relaxed and friendly. Wood planks line the floors, as well as the walls, which are adorned with local memorabilia and flat-screen TVs. "It's a down-home restaurant. Everyone comes here," says Williams.

The original Dowling's was founded in 1972 by Joel Louis Dowling and operated until

1995 when he retired. His grandson, Jeremy Telford, re-opened the restaurant in 2003. Dowling's is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Sundown West Tavern Patio & Grill

Known for its burgers and fried green beans, Sundown is a unique place to hang out, either inside or out on the patio. Enjoy live music on the weekends and the bar area with TVs, pool tables, darts and video trivia.



"We have the best chicken. All of our meat is slow-cooked at a low temperature, so that it comes out tender

TRY THESE BEST DISHES



Bacon Cheeseburger, Sundown West Tavern & Grill



Shrimp Étouffée, Ponchatoulas

Portico Bar & Grill



"Our goal is to be a really good restaurant that has a bar, rather than just a bar that serves food," says Kenny O'Neil, owner of Portico in Ruston.

Portico serves traditional American food, including steaks, burgers, salads, sandwiches and pizzas, in a casual atmosphere. Favorites are the filet and ribeye, the shrimp po-boy and

the grilled mahi mahi sandwich. If you're a salad lover, try the asiago Caesar salad or the spinach salad.

The restaurant features an indoor/outdoor patio and bar and plays live music on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday nights. Portico is open every day of the week.

Ponchatoulas

If you're looking for the flavors of Louisiana, try the New Orleans style cuisine at Ponchatoulas. This Ruston favorite is famous for its crawfish étouffée, red beans and rice, crab cakes, po-boys and white chocolate bread pudding.

Patrons often come for Ponchatoulas' live entertainment and happy hour drink specials.

RAW

This contemporary restaurant is an area favorite. Unwind with a drink and enjoy dishes in a relaxing atmosphere. Located in the Historic Downtown District, it is the perfect spot to gather with friends or have a romantic dinner. The restaurant features trained chefs in Japanese cuisine at the sushi bar and a modern, big city ambiance.

RAW is a sushi restaurant serving the freshest fish available from local markets. With all rolls and dishes made to order, the chefs can create just about anything. The menu offers both cooked and raw dishes, with an emphasis on small plates. RAW also features a wine list, fine sakes and specialty cocktails to complement menu items.

RAW is open for dinner Tuesday through Saturday.



Ribeye Steak, Portico



World Famous Scatterload, Dowling's Smokehouse



Sunset Roll, RAW

For Every Season

No matter what time of year you visit, there's plenty to see and do in Ruston. We asked residents to describe what they love about the changing seasons in Lincoln Parish.

Winter

“ You get the opportunity to see the mighty tree branches say goodbye to their colorful array of leaves. Without them it helps you appreciate just the sheer beauty of the trees. ”

- Shonna Jordan

Spring

“ Spring in Lincoln Parish is always a welcome sight. The yellow daffodils and pink azaleas are beautiful to see after the winter. ”

- Margret Ann Emory

Summer

“ What I love about summer in Ruston is the peaches. From late May until early August, some of the South's best-tasting peaches are available right here in Ruston. ”

- Lee Garrett

Fall

“ Ruston tends to get its first hard freeze later in the year than most parts of the country, so the gorgeous colors of fall last quite a while. The Bradford pear trees are among the most beautiful—they practically glow! ” - Glynn Harris

